THE COMMONWEAL

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A SUCCESSFUL OPERATION

ACCORDING to Walter Duranty, the Moscow correspondent of the New York *Times*, reports reaching that city "from abroad" that "the Vatican wants to relieve millions of victims of the Russian famine" are greeted with the same scorn and indignation that met earlier news that German Nazis were collecting funds for "starving German Volga colonists" and the appeals of emigré Russian newspapers in the Baltic States for "relief of a worse famine in Russia than that of 1921." As the New York *Times* editorially points out, in a note interpolated into Mr. Duranty's despatch, there has been no appeal by the Vatican for relief of "millions of victims of the Russian famine," but such an appeal was made by Cardinal Innitzer, the Archbishop of Vienna. No doubt, in Moscow's official propaganda, any action taken by a member of the Catholic hierarchy anywhere in connection with Communism, is interpreted as an official move on the part of the Holy See. Mr. Duranty's whole despatch gives a clear account of the official attitude of the Russian government toward the frightful tragedy of the famine, and his comments, while very tactful, go to prove that behind the veil of Russian propaganda, there has been, and still continues, one of the most horrible famines known to modern history. Further evidence that the Russian government's denials are largely false, is contained in the despatch from Moscow which was sent by Ralph W. Barnes to the New York *Herald Tribune* and which passed the censor. "While there is no means of determining the death toll," writes Mr. Barnes, "it is not unreasonable to believe that in the Soviet Union over the winter and spring as many as 1,000,000 persons, mostly peasants, died from causes due to malnutrition, including outright hunger. The actual figures may be in excess of that." Mr. Duranty implicitly supports this view and comments: "Until this harvest the picture was dark enough. The Kremlin had ruthlessly carried through the agrarian revolution of collective farming, and the costs had been heavy for the Russian people, but it now looks as if the revolution is complete because the harvest is really good."

In other words, the operation has been successful, although about one million of the patients died.

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But is Mr. Duranty correct in his statement that the harvest of this year is really good? He quotes the figures supplied by the official bureaus relating to the grain collections, showing how favorably the figures compare with those of last year. He also informs us that in a North Caucasus industrial town the price of bread dropped on the open market from a very high level to one much lower. But it seems strange that the very next day after Mr. Duranty had sent this pleasant news, the price of bread in Moscow itself was doubled.

Also, the efforts made by some of the most careful and painstaking foreign correspondents in Russia to ascertain the truth concerning the famine reports have been frustrated by the government. Censorship regulations, which have been becoming increasingly severe for the last six months, now "virtually bar all resident foreign correspondents from first-hand investigation in areas of the Soviet Union where conditions are unfavorable." William H. Chamberlain, for example, recognized as one of the most objective of the resident correspondents, was refused permission to visit the districts where the agrarian conditions have been most acute. The *Herald Tribune* correspondent was turned back from an attempt to enter the Ukraine, where conditions have been particularly bad. The correspondents are expected to use the official statements handed out by Moscow.

If the Soviet authorities consider what Cardinal Innitzer says merely as a further evidence of Vatican hostility to Communism, and therefore reject it, what do they expect us to think of a report made by an English visitor to the famine districts, published by a German Lutheran magazine recently? "The specter of hunger stalks through every province of the Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics," writes this observer. Moreover, there can be no real doubt of the facts summarized by Cardinal Innitzer. They have been gathered by many observers. They are substantiated by thousands of letters and appeals for help smuggled out of Russia by various agencies, relief societies, and religious missionaries. That cannibalism is rife, as Cardinal Innitzer says, had been reported many times. We give below some quotations from letters received from Russia, as reported by a writer, G. M. Godden, in the London *Tablet* for July 1. Evidence of the good faith of the transmitters of these letters is in the hands of the *Tablet*. Some of the letters come from prison camps, or exile settlements. They light up the horrors of the real Russian scene.

"We don't believe we shall ever again have enough to eat; our faces and feet are swelling from hunger. Out of the fifty-one persons sent here [West Siberia], twenty-three have died."

"Thirty people were in one room of our barracks; now all are dead except my wife and I and our child. We had to cut wood in forty-nine degrees of frost, our feet only wrapped in old sacks; and we have almost nothing to eat."

"You cannot imagine how the people hunger. All people who do not receive food parcels from abroad die."

"My husband died from hunger two weeks ago; my two children are already swollen with hunger; we shall soon follow him."

"Men have become like hungry beasts."

"Men are eating dead beasts; they are also eating human bodies."

The Cardinal of Vienna declares that humanity and Christian charity both demand that relief should be supplied to the victims of Communism. The great famine of 1921, which was relieved largely by the United States, was mainly due to natural causes—the failure of the harvest. But, if the Soviet authorities are right, at present the harvest is bountiful. This may or may not be true. If so, then the famine has been directly caused by the merciless efforts of the Soviet government to take the grain from the peasants who grow it, for the benefit of the favored classes of the army and the town workers, and even to export it out of the country. It may well be that the outside world may again have to come to the rescue of the Russian people. But, if so, the price which must be paid for exercising charity is the further bolstering up of the diabolical régime of Communism. This point was clearly made by Professor Leonid I. Strakhovsky, of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, in a recent radio speech, in which he said:

"The American people and the United States government have once already extended a helping hand, supposedly to the Russian people, but actually to the Soviet government. The American Relief Administration saved millions of Russians from starvation and death; but it also saved the Soviet government from destruction at the hands of hungry and desperate people. There is no human feeling among Soviet leaders. Human life for them is cheap. Generations of Americans have been horrified by the tales of exile in Siberia as practised in Imperial Russia. But if we compare records, we find that during an entire century the emperors of Russia sent into exile only about one half of the number exiled to Siberia by the Soviet government during one year. The Bolsheviks' advent to power and their maintenance as rulers of Russia have cost the Russian nation over eight million people, executed by their firing squads. And recently, at the London conference, their spokesman calmly admitted to a European diplomat that they are ready to sacrifice fifteen to twenty million more people in order to achieve their immediate aim in Russia, i.e., to transform it into a Communist state."

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE BATTLE of broadcasting between Germany and Austria has now, according to a special wireless despatch to the New York *Times*, developed into the more direct action of a battle of amplifiers. Nazis demonstrating across the River Inn, an Austro-German frontier, employed electric amplifiers to carry insulting speeches about "Milemetternich," as they call the diminutive Austrian Chancellor, Dollfuss, over the border to Austrian ears. Whereupon the Austrian authorities brought up amplifiers of their own and broadcast patriotic Austrian airs from phonograph records, drowning out the Nazis. The latter stepped-up the current on their loud-speakers and the Austrians brought up a military band to add to their counter-attack. Meanwhile the Nazi broadcasts from Munich continue, Dollfuss and Mussolini have met and issued a comuniqué about the identity of their ideas, Austria is reported to be sending additional troops to her German frontier while it is rumored that the Nazis plan an invasion of Austria some time this month. All of this may be comic opera in the best Viennese style or it may be the events leading up to death and violent destruction. We have expressed our doubt of the latter eventuality and we continue to doubt it because we feel sure that the German government must appreciate how hopelessly outnumbered, friendless and unequipped she is, compared to the forces that would oppose her. We lend more credence to the report that Mussolini is striving to effect an Italo-Austrian-German-Hungarian bloc which Rumania might later join. This would seem to be a reasonable trading area, that is, one in which many mutually profitable exchanges could be carried on. Much of the Nazi storming, no doubt, is for home political purposes. The danger is that a few hotheads may not appreciate this.

War or Words?

ONE NEED not accept the stinger at the end of the description of tea in "The Flying Inn"—"And like all the East he comes from, he is poison when he's strong"—to feel that East and West remain profoundly separated. In spite of publicity, commerce and the international idea, in spite of the East's adoption of our technology and our clothing, in spite even of real moral appreciations and rapprochements, the moral patterns of the two civilizations are dissimilar. This is only heightened for the Occidental by his frequent admiration of the heroic traits of particular Orientals. You can express this, if you are agnostic, by saying merely that, whatever the exemplar of a genuine Oriental religion means by "brotherhood," he never means what you do by "democracy"; or if you have some clew to the Catholic core of our civilization, you can say that, whatever he means by the value of the spirit, he never means what you do by the value of the soul. Either definition is surely borne out by the startling items which have recently crept into the papers. An orthodox Hindu, speaking before a commission, defends suttee—not as a requirement of his religion, which it is not, but as the loftiest possible ideal. What Westerner, casual or uninstructed or even criminal, does not feel the cosmic difference which this evokes: the barrier, palpable and absolute, between one moral world and another? Or, in Japan, during the trial of certain military cadets for terrorism, nine young boys join the nation-wide plea for mercy to the malefactors; and as a token of the patriotism of their motives, amputate their little fingers and send them to the public prosecutor. Who of us can follow the nightmare idealism which plays and preys upon children, so that an exalted savagery of this sort is admired, or accepted, or even possible? Soul can be very distant from soul—there will never be an actual super-nationalism until it is realized how distant.

The East

WHEN next the group of Southern women whose admirable campaign for anti-lynching publicity we have praised more than once, offers a summary of progress, it will have to take cognizance of at least one tragic and disgraceful setback. There was recently reported from Alabama a case of double lynching which appears to possess both the old sinister features of mob violence and of cowardly non-resistance on the part of the officiating sheriff, and the newer element which is being injected into these cases by the International Labor Defense. Three Negroes, two of them boys of sixteen and eighteen, have been on trial for the murder of a white girl. Lawyers representing the I.L.D.—whose legal mouthpiece was so theatrically and so insolently vocal in the Scottsboro case—were barred from the defense by the presiding judge, after the family of one of the defendants had refused their services; following which, other defense counsel were appointed by the court, and the I.L.D. counsel were escorted to Birmingham under the protection of the National Guard. For whatever reason—the sheriff alleges, for the prisoners' protection, the judge denies both knowledge of and consent to the move—the prisoners were themselves taken by car at night to Birmingham, and when attack was made en route by an armed mob, were evidently surrendered without a fight, since they were the only casualties reported. The bullet-ridden bodies of two of the boys were found; the third victim, wounded, escaped from the lynchers and was eventually recaptured by the sheriff.

Lynching et Al.

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IT CONSTITUTES no defense of the community which perpetrated this double crime—the murder of unconvicted suspects, and the violent subversion of law—that it was probably deeply exasperated by the tactics of the International Defense group. A self-governing people are charged with maintaining order and the whole decorum of justice. To say that they are impelled to a lynching by the attitude of outsiders and professional trouble-makers is not to excuse them but to condemn them; nor, incidentally, is the public memory so short that it has forgotten that the lynching of Negroes is an old pastime, and the baiting of Southerners by the I.L.D. a comparatively new one. But any objective observer must be struck by the discrepancy between the theoretical love for the under-dog which is part of the philosophy of these particular radicals, and the officious and unconciliatory spirit with which they provoke excesses bound to tell chiefly against the under-dog. The I.L.D. lawyer of Scottsboro fame, who talked about the "lantern-jawed morons" on the jury, the three outsiders in this case who presented in court a defense "contract" repudiated by the alleged signers, the statement here by the secretary of the I.L.D. that "lynch lawyers" had been assigned by the court to the Negroes' defense, all are examples. Whether they represent the "ruin and then rule" policy which undoubtedly animates much of international radicalism, or whether they proceed merely from private arrogance and congenital inaptitude for manners and policy, they do not promise a lasting fruit in humane and really civilized reforms. Temporarily, they may help the Negro's cause, on the whole; if he is no more than a pawn in the International's game, at least they focus attention on his plight. God uses all instruments, and may easily use a clamorous, class-conscious collectivist lawyer. But the Negro would be well advised to steer clear of a permanent rapprochement with these forces. Happily, he seems to have the sanity, in the main, to do so by instinct.

IT seems to us that the *Herald Tribune* deserves a clap for printing an article recently by H. W. McIntire entitled "Romances of the 'Bad Break.'" So many sagas of woe have been indited since 1929, so many sets of statistics compiled to show how many families have been broken up and how many individuals broken down, that one blinks a little to discover that the author of this sprightly personal narrative is convinced there are still jobs to be had in the country by those kicked out of the city, still ways by which vagrant families can support themselves in frugal comfort, above all that there is still romance in living. Mr. McIntire is no Pollyanna; he has met his share, in the course of wide travels through the country, of the dispossessed and disintegrated, whom these bad times have, to all intents and purposes, destroyed; but there is tonic and refreshment in his insistence, even for the down-and-outer, on the personal equation. Enthusiasm, stamina, count everywhere: "Lawyer Wiley will stand all day in the bread line; Lawyer Moran will use the same physical energy in exploration." He will leave the city, and go to the hinterland, the country or the small town; he will find much kindness and charity, even now and even among the hard-boiled; and he will probably find or make a job. It will not usually be a white collar job but, however meagerly, it will tide him over until he can strike root again. On Mr. McIntire's list are dentists, editors, musicians, financiers; all of them were ruined, and all of them refused to give up. They took what they could get—box-making, care-taking, chores—and kept their eyes open for the modest better chances that inevitably came. Adaptive, pioneering, this type is what he calls it: the true romantic. It is good to be reminded that it is still here.

The Silver Lining

THE NEW Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Aviation reports that during the first half of 1933, American operated airlines flew a total of 77,000,000 miles with only two passenger fatalities and only four pilot fatalities. This compares with sixteen passenger fatalities, in the same period of 1932, and ten pilot fatalities. Incidentally, the report indicates an increase of 14,000,000 passenger-miles flown in the first half of this year. A passenger-mile is the equivalent of one passenger flown one mile. It is somewhat like an erg or an ohm, but a little more human. The number of passenger-miles per fatality was 38,000,000. This is an altogether laudable ratio and represents less danger than a walk down Main Street or up Broadway. It probably compares more than favorably with going up and down stairs. If it can only be sustained, we believe it will be a bigger aid to the aviation industry than improvements in speed. After flying several thousand miles some years ago, we had come to the conclusion that, while feasible, it was just plain unnatural for man to be up in the air with no solid connection between him and the earth's crust. Not only did we find the air an empty element with nowhere near the attractions to be observed on a stroll through the woods or the diversities of sailing in a small boat, but also the risk seemed not an occasional but a constant factor. However, if the flyers can keep up the record just established, we will certainly change our mind and follow the example of Mrs. Roosevelt and the others cheerfully winging around in the blue by the millions.

Another Aviation Record

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FACING REALITIES

THERE is one tremendous fact—or so it seems to us—underlying the Concordat with Germany established by the Holy See, which is bound to influence most profoundly all types of Catholic activities, both those directly concerned with the spiritual mission of the Church, and those secondary activities which are connected with temporal affairs. In the article written by our Managing Editor, George N. Shuster, now in Germany, as the result of intimate conversations with many prominent ecclesiastics and laymen, both the difficulties and the necessary action connected with this momentous step are adequately outlined. Great differences of opinion may legitimately be expressed over details in the Concordat, and concerning its practical workability. With these, for the present, we are not concerned. We are, however, convinced that there is a very plain signal post for Catholic Action set up by the German Concordat, which may guide the leaders and the workers in the Church through the storms of today and those which all signs now discernible predict for tomorrow. In fact, it is well to underline this aspect of the situation, namely, that it is hardly possible to doubt that fundamental social changes —and social upheavals—are proceeding throughout the world. Any lingering hope that shallow optimists may entertain concerning the quick return of the sort of "normalcy" that prevailed before the economic earthquake should be dismissed. We are certainly entering a new epoch in world affairs, as definitely different from that which has been shattered as the industrial revolution was from that which preceded it.

Precisely what form this new epoch is to assume, we are far from venturesome enough to attempt to predict. With firm confidence, however, justified by the Catholic faith itself, we can and do say that the new epoch can and should be affected—if possible it should be molded—by enlightened human will. We disagree with all schools of thought which bow down and worship the idols of "inevitable forces," or "immutable economic or social laws." Whether these schools proclaim that Communism is inevitable, or that Fascism in some form or other is unescapable, or that "democratic social control" must necessarily take command of the present chaotic situation, we reply that one or the other of these systems may indeed come to power—but that, if so, its victory will not be due to a blind, doom-like social force. Human will now, as always, will be the eventual decisive factor. If human will is enlightened, if it serves first principles derived from truth, then it works for good. If, on the contrary, human will is ignorant, or serves false principles, then disaster follows, for an individual, or a nation, or, conceivably, the whole mass of mankind.

All of which, no doubt, sounds platitudinous, the merest commonplace. Yet as it is true—and as it is most obviously a neglected truth, it must be said again and again. The Church does say it again and again. And once more that truth is apparent in the signing of the Concordat with Nazi Germany. We should remember, in considering this subject, how strongly and universally the German bishops had condemned the Nazi movement before it came to power. The pagan philosophy of its leaders was anathematized. Yet the Church has now signed a treaty with the Nazi government. That government came to power through the expressed will of the majority of German voters. Obnoxious as its philosophy must still be to all thoughtful German Catholics, nevertheless the central authority of the Church consents to recognize it—because that government has consented to recognize the fundamental rights of the Catholic religion. If it acts up to its promise—now a solemn obligation—the Church resigns itself, because it must, to relinquish those secondary forms of action, political and social, in which German Catholics, especially the laity, have so long been conspicuous.

This brings us to the heart of our present discussion. It seems to us that the highest authority in the universal Church most certainly knows that Catholic Action is today dealing with stark, uncompromising realities, and is orientating all its forces to deal with them. A whole epoch of many illusions is passing away. To meet the issues presented by the new era now coming upon us, the Church throughout the world is animating her leaders with its own solicitude for that which is fundamental. And what is more fundamental than all other things is to preserve and strengthen against all obstacles, and if need be at the cost of sacrificing many things good in themselves, the purely spiritual mission of the Church of Christ.

Among the most necessary instruments for doing the practical work of that mission is, of course, and really foremost, the unimpeded continuance of the Sacrifice of the Mass, and of the imparting of the sacraments. Then, and in conjunction with these first duties, religious instruction and secular education so far as it is possible to carry it on in all its branches. And, accompanying all these things, the cultivation and the exemplification of prayer.

These are the primary things which the Church seeks to preserve and to exercise in Nazi Germany. These are the things which must be guarded and strengthened and extended everywhere else. Unless the Church succeeds in this essential work, all other Christian activities—even the sublime mission of temporal charity, the care of the sick, the assisting of the feeble and the aged —will dwindle away, and will even disappear from great areas of the earth.

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GERMANY UNDER THE CONCORDAT

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

Mr. Shuster sends this correspondence from Berlin. He has been a student of German politics, as readers of his book, "The Germans," well know, and through contact with intellectual forces in Germany and his own first-hand investigations, has kept in touch with the rapid and internationally important developments in that country. As a former professor at Notre Dame University and the Catholic University and now for several years Managing Editor of THE COMMONWEAL, *he is well informed on Catholic history.—The Editors.*

IN TRIER, at the close of July. The weather remarkably good, since this is a rainy European summer ruthlessly disrespectful of finery and parades. Here comes a procession—just one of an endless number of processions—with flags flying, singing and praying. A political manifestation? No. The Catholic common people have gathered from every corner of the Rhineland and other German districts to venerate the Holy Coat. For more than a thousand years tradition has respected this garment as the vesture for which the soldiers on Calvary cast lots. Whether it is really that sacred tunic or not, who shall say? There is no conclusive evidence to support the view that Saint Helena actually found so remarkable a treasure. But there is also no proof to the contrary. Theologians do not greatly care. For them the fact of importance is that devotion has centered during many centuries round this garment, for the exposition of which a great altar was built especially in a cathedral which houses authentic relics of virgins, martyrs and bishops who lived in days when Rome threatened the existence of Christendom far more than the clustering hostilities of our age do now.

And it is essentially the Catholic peasant of the Rhenish countries one sees here—a peasant, man or woman, bronzed by labor in difficult fields, blessed only sparingly by sunshine and harvest, but trained during seemingly endless generations in loyalty to the Faith. Those who rule this people spiritually or politically may fail or change; it itself remains, almost a symbol of the rock of Peter and, however lacking in matters commonly termed spirit, expressive of that hunger for the Sacred Spirit which is possibly the deepest manifestation of the religious life. Therefore it is well we should place against that background—as permanent as any of which mankind can boast—a discussion of that which has come to be since the Holy See and the Hitler government underwrote what we all hope will prove to be a treaty of peace.

The Concordat is an agreement concerning which opinions differ. There is no unanimity with regard to it among Catholics, and it is safe to say that views of it among the supporters of the Hitler régime are several. Yet hardly anyone doubts that the document posits a point of rest in what is otherwise a chaos of tendencies, opinions and emotions. The language as such is quite clear, though from several points of view the whole is rather novel. As a rule, Concordats deal in the main with three things: the relations between the authorities of Church and State proper (e.g., the election of bishops); religious education, or more broadly the rights of the Church in the matter of education; and the privileges to be accorded Catholic Action in the larger sense. The new Concordat goes farther, in that it reckons with possibilities (e.g., the performance of civil marriages) which have hitherto not been reckoned with as actualities in Germany.

As a result of conversations with a considerable number of prominent persons, I may be able to explain to some extent how the Concordat "happened" and what it signifies. It is, however, impossible to say how it will work out; and the reader may feel sure that Rome and Berlin do not know either. Undoubtedly the first steps were taken by Colonel von Papen who—whatever an American may think of his political philosophy—is sincerely interested in the progress of the Church, which he views in the spirit of the majority of German Benedictines, who are his close friends and supporters. Whereas for Papen and his circle the true order of society is organic, in a sense aristocratic, Bruening's essential conception of life and religion was Franciscan and so found its ideal in a Christian democracy both caritative and in a sense egalitarian. We ourselves must not forget, particularly in these difficult times, that universality of the Church which permits the faithful to work out their existences according to different patterns, each naturally given. And if the religion of Papen has in this instance triumphed officially over the religion of Bruening, the reason is a practical one and by no means a negation by Rome of the temporarily defeated view.

For Rome itself the matter of greatest importance was undoubtedly the emergence of a Fascist régime. Since Cardinal Gasparri's time, the Vatican has been guided by the principle that Catholics owe allegiance to the regularly constituted authority in any given state. It does not presume to judge the moral value or the desirability of that authority. Nevertheless we shall not be far wrong when we assume that there was for the Holy See a certain satisfaction in dealing with a

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government anxious to follow the example given by Mussolini—so anxious, indeed, that several stipulations in the contract apply rather to conditions existing in Italy than to any discernible German verities. That Berlin for its part was so amenable must be attributed to the extraordinary influence of Mussolini upon the Hitler leaders. Il Duce's success in making of weak and disparate "states" a unified and respected nation is the chief source of that hope which, in spite of everything, is discernible in Germany. This recipe will (it is believed) guarantee German greatness if carefully followed.

What, then, does the Concordat do? Primarily it lends the sanction of the Church to the annihilation of the Center party. This is a fact of really tremendous importance, which brings to a close the work of many generations. The Church has forbidden churchmen to act or speak politically, and it has acquiesced in the right of the State to destroy all Catholic organizations having even a semi-political program. In the Germany of a few years ago, all was different. Then prelates sat in the Reichstag; statesmen elected to office by the Catholic population presided over the destinies of the nation; and there was even a network of labor unions—the so-called Christliche Gewerkschaften—having a set program of political action. We may well believe that the decision to abolish all this was not an easy one to make. And so it may be well to enumerate the chief reasons which may have guided the Church in Rome and in Germany.

To begin with there was, of course, no proof that the Center party could have survived. Not merely was it a minority compelled to face a determined Fascist majority, but it itself was sorely divided and imperiled by loss of confidence. Not a few of the leaders were anxious to join forces with Hitler; and an increasing percentage of Catholic voters was leaving the party ranks. Though the election statistics of the year 1932 show a remarkably constant vote, there is no doubt that Catholics were rallying to other standards while their places were being taken by liberals who had no other party to support. Other weaknesses of organization and personnel had appeared. These things were known to the German bishops, whom the Vatican consulted more carefully than usual. The mere fact that the former leader of the Center party, Monsignor Kaas, had as much to do with the actual phrasing of the Concordat as any other person is sufficient proof that no point of importance was overlooked.

Nevertheless I think it safe to think that over and above these reasons for abandoning the traditional course there stood the marked personal opposition of Pope Pius to the spread of Bolshevism. Early in the spring of this year the Holy Father mentioned with warm approval the emergence in Germany of a powerful anti-Communist movement, and there is no doubt this part of the Hitler program was more acceptable to Rome than was the necessity in which Bruening found himself to coöperate with the Socialistic left. Rome sees in Moscow the final antagonist of Christianity, and therefore—as abundant evidence shows—heartily welcomes a trend in Germany more actively opposed to Bolshevism than the sorely harassed Center party could be.

It remains to add that the Church did attempt to say a word for the Jew. It is asserted on the best authority than an effort was made by Rome itself to mitigate the attitude of the Hitler government in this regard. Great German Catholic bishops have worked hard, in silence, to intervene and to pacify emotions. One of the bravest and best of religious publications, the organ of the Young Catholics, was temporarily suspended because of an article which outlined the right Christian attitude toward the Jew. And in dozens of cases which have come to my own attention, the fine charity which continues to give luster to Catholic life in Germany has dealt with this problem nobly and generously.

The second thing the Concordat does is to define the rights and liberties accorded to the Church. As we have seen, the right to establish a Catholic party has been denied, and the government is allowed (as also in the earlier Concordats) to challenge the appointment of new bishops. Accordingly we may sum up by saying that the Church has pledged itself not to interfere with the progress of Fascism in Germany. On the other hand, the freedom of religious education has been increased. Confessional schools may now be established in districts where they have been hitherto forbidden. Appointments to theological professorates are now to be made directly by Rome, a change which may have a considerable effect upon German Catholic scholarship. Finally, the right to organize for religious purposes is acknowledged.

While the Concordat does not specify which organizations are to remain, the German government promises to be liberal. To date, quite a number of important societies have been recognized, though in most instances changes of personnel or program are demanded. Thus while the youth organizations survive, a certain amount of coöperation with the government is required. At the present writing, negotiations are still in progress, so that speculation as to the final outcome is rather futile. Of great importance is the fact that the Bishop of Osnabruck has been appointed to the State Council, which affords the Church political representation in a measure compensatory for what was lost through the political change. It may be stated here that while the German bishops

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desire the help and prayers of the Church throughout the world, they positively do not want anything faintly resembling political forlorn-hopes in other countries. Germany at the present moment resembles a family which has been smashing china, and even the friendliest neighbor nose is out of order.

In a word, nobody ought to be led—as even some disappointed German Catholics are—to view the Concordat as the result of a decision to "sell out" in order that ecclesiastical properties and privileges might be saved. The fact of the matter is that such considerations were left entirely in the background. Rome has, if one may hazard the phrase, gambled on missionary possibilities. It chose between "going into the Catacombs," with the chance of winning over the disaffected particularly among members of former worker parties, and opening its doors without a word to the huge, angry, embittered crowds who have rallied to Hitler's support. The Church seemed to have been given the opportunity to show that when politics and all else have failed, the wisdom of Christ abounds, even in quietness. Time alone can prove whether the decision was right or wrong. It seems to me obvious, however, that here again reason was on the side of Rome.

For, in the final analysis, Catholic life in Germany is really and truly life. It has a beauty and dignity in these troubled weeks which I have never seen before. To him that hath shall be given. And to them who possess the secret of His mystery Who loved all and died for all, neither fortune nor time nor bondage destroys the light which is as of five wounds. I have seen much of heartache and dismay these days. But I have also come to know more truly than ever that Christ is on the earth.

INDICTMENT

By STUART D. GOULDING

FROM a newspaper standpoint the Catholic Church is the least satisfactory and efficient news source in the United States. It volunteers little information about itself and yields, under pressure, very little more. What is obtained must literally be "dug out" from reluctant informants, while the details are so meager that the greatest of difficulty is experienced in piecing together an adequate story. There are exceptions, but the exceptions are few.

This indictment is occasioned by an example in point which has recurred in the writer's experience again and again over a period of nearly ten years in newspaper work and which is being duplicated daily in almost every newspaper office in America. It is strengthened by THE COMMONWEAL editorial entitled "Let Catholics Take Warning!"

The example referred to occurred when, last spring, of a Saturday evening, the news wires carried reams of copy on the inauguration of the Holy Year. As in other communities, it was desirable to have a local angle to the story, giving the special services that might be held in conjunction. Inquiry by telephone to several city pastors failed to elicit any information. The chancery office was called without greater effect and the caller referred to the diocesan weekly. There, beyond the news that a holy hour service was to be held in churches the following Thursday by order of the bishop, no information was secured. Yet scarcely a church in the area failed the following day to make mention of the Holy Year at Mass or to have special Vespers or Benediction.

That afternoon the broadcast from Vatican City on the illumination of the great cross on Mt. Scenario outside of Florence had been most clear. It was decided to append this for the purpose of bolstering up the wofully weak local Holy Year story. Yet not one person could be found who recalled the names of the great choirs which sang nor even the name of the order so signally honored by the Pope. Finally an attempt was made to secure information on Passion Sunday (which some staff members justifiably confused with Palm Sunday), but this information also was not to be had. As the local story finally appeared, it was two paragraphs long.

Because of this incident I was curious enough to look over the pile of mail that had reached the desk regarding religious observances in other denominations. The material was legion and most of it found its way into the paper. Among the items was one retelling the plans for a sunrise interdenominational Easter service. Another retold the story of a repeat concert at one of the leading Protestant churches. Several of the items gave the speakers, topics and time for addresses of daily services during the coming week, while still another described at great length the oft-repeated tale of the Jewish Passover feast still more than a week away. In addition, there were countless items of social activities in the different Protestant churches all of which were used almost verbatim. The one Catholic item, two paragraphs long, told of a Knights of Columbus forum meeting for Sunday night.

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Now the paper to which reference is made is located in a city where the Catholic population outnumbers Protestants and Jews alike. Moreover the paper has a considerable Catholic circulation which it desires to please. The city staff is more than anxious to print whatever Catholic news it can get because it is "live news." Yet it prints very little.

I use the phrase "whatever Catholic news it can get" advisedly. It can get very little. Few of the local rectories list their telephones, while the office of the bishop is almost inaccessible from a newspaper standpoint. The one reliable news source is the diocesan weekly which is, for circulation reasons, not overanxious to give out information to a competitor. Thus this newspaper is somewhat at a dead end for Catholic news. That it does not print more erroneous information about the Church is due entirely to the Catholic staff members who are appealed to when questions arise.

If the condition described above were peculiar to this one paper, or if the instance recorded were isolated and infrequent of occurrence, it would be idle to discuss it. As a matter of fact it is a condition recognized generally by newspapermen throughout the East, at least. Invariably newspapers, whatever the personal convictions of their publishers, are willing and glad to print Catholic news on an equal basis with other religious news if and when they can get it.

The conclusion reached by most newspapermen after a few years' effort is that the Church does not want its activities to appear in print. The attitude of many priests bears out this supposition. They feel that their people attend Mass each Sunday and hear from the pulpit whatever parish news is vital, and if they are interested in social, organization and athletic activities of the parish or diocese they will hear of these in the Sunday announcement or at meetings they are supposed to attend. The significance of religious observances they are presumed to know. That this is optimism carried to an extreme will readily be recognized.

In addition, many priests do not like to have their names appear in print, either from innate modesty or fear of criticism from colleagues. Others disapprove of the frequency with which some clergy of other denominations burst into print, while nearly all fear to be classed as publicity seekers. The restraint of the priests is admirable in its way; their motives are understandable. Moreover, by not even accepting publicity for their churches or themselves, they keep themselves above suspicion.

It is because of the attitude of the priests that Catholic news is always a parochial affair; at most an intra-church affair. Catholics are encouraged to read their diocesan weeklies or monthlies for diocesan news, and many churches offer them on sale at their doors. There the matter is left to chance. That the proportion of Catholics reading diocesan papers is few is clearly recognized. Yet few Catholics fail to read their daily and Sunday local newspapers. And of all creeds they alone fail to find in the secular press news of their churches' activities.

There are exceptions, to be sure. Reporters are assigned to cover outstanding Catholic events, and special effort is made by them all to get Catholic news of extra-parochial interest. The recent industrial conferences were more than generously covered while ordinations, dedications, funerals and like events are adequately covered. But the every-day news, the bread and butter local news of papers, is almost entirely neglected by the Catholic Church while it is assiduously cultivated by the non-Catholic churches.

An important angle to the problem, which the Catholic Church has largely overlooked, is the molding of public opinion. THE COMMONWEAL has phrased it well: ". . . Public opinion is nothing but a vague, voiceless, impotent emotion, unless or until it has been organized, made articulate, given facts to digest and assimilate, and supplied with channels for its operation."

The "corporate silence" described by THE COMMONWEAL, the "conspiracy of silence" as newspapermen would call it, has its negative reaction on the public. To those outside its communion the Catholic Church is an eternal mystery. Even in the East, where the deep-rooted suspicions of other generations have all but disappeared, it looms as an unknown and unknowable quantity. As a religious force it is accepted, but as an organization it is a gigantic question mark.

The Catholic reared from birth in a liturgical Church seldom appreciates the difficulty experienced by members of a non-liturgical church in understanding his creed, his dogmas and his ceremonies. Whereas the Catholic sees in each movement of the priest at Mass some gesture of significance, the non-Catholic sees nothing but meaningless, trivial gestures. Indeed, Protestants see Catholics tip their hats when they pass a church and, if they venture within the church, see worshipers cross themselves when they kneel to pray. The altar, the vigil lights and the stations, the quiet gloom of the church at rest, are as incomprehensible as they may be beautiful. But other interests occupy their time and they do not trouble to inquire into the teachings of the Catholic Church, its liturgy, its moral precepts, its dogma, above all its viewpoint, which remain thus forever a mystery.

The solidity of the Catholic people, their devotion to their Church, their respect for its com-

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mands and their attendance at its services are tangible enough for non-Catholics to admire, but the reasons behind that devotion, the impulses activating Catholics, are as incomprehensible as are the mysteries of Buddhism or the Yogi. Nor do the history, sociology, archaeology, non-Catholic philosophy, as taught at sectarian schools and colleges, correct that misunderstanding. More often than not, there becomes crystallized in the non-Catholic mind the opinion that the Catholic religion is an illusion, and while they may admire the faith of Catholics and envy their organization, they ask no part of these things for themselves. In the end they assume a superiority which, augmented by whatever social position they may have due to longer residence in this country than their Catholic brethren, borders on intellectual snobbery and intolerance. Nor is it to be believed that this snobbery is without its effect on Catholics.

Hence it is as much for the protection of the Church against negative forces as for dissemination of news among Catholics themselves that the Church needs to reach out and use the news media available to it. Catholics know, or should know, what the Church is; non-Catholics cannot be presumed to have that knowledge. Analyzed, the assumed intellectual superiority of non-Catholics is an illusion in which they have been encouraged by the "corporate silence" of the Church.

The Church has set up immense machinery for missionary endeavor and propagation of the Faith. Yet the missionary endeavor is largely to the heathen and the propagating influences reach but a small proportion of those without the Catholic Church. The most powerful medium which could be used, the one effective means, is almost entirely neglected. Catholic newspapers, periodicals and magazines circulate almost wholly among Catholics. They do an incalculably good job of interpreting the Church to Catholics. Yet with the exception of THE COMMONWEAL few of these media find their way into non-Catholic homes. The daily press goes everywhere, is read by everyone. If newspapers will publish tracts of the Christian Scientists, explanations of the Jewish Passover, expositions of the Greek Easter, they will also publish explanations of the Catholic novena, the meaning of retreats and other rites understandable to Catholics but mysteries to non-Catholics.

So organized are newspapers today that they reach out to every part of their own communities and the next, and the whole world around, for news. Wireless, cable, telephone, wire ticker, teletype, telegraph, news letters, minute by minute bring the latest news to the papers for rapid transmission to the public. Papers that ten years ago were content with two editions a day now frequently issue four or five, while in larger centers editions are run almost hourly. The amount of news material, notwithstanding the immense quantities that come in, is seldom too much. True, there is enough so that what is used is selective. Yet the appetites of the linotype machines are tremendous and there come times, daily, when in even the largest newspaper city rooms these appetites are hard to satisfy.

Supplemental news therefore is usually required. Features, syndicated articles, columns, and "fillers" are constantly in demand. These are supplied by syndicates and organizations desiring publicity. Many first editions of afternoon newspapers are filled from the back forward with as much of this material as is required and, while it succumbs in later editions to "live" news, most of it ultimately is printed somewhere and is read by someone.

Many organizations realize this demand for early copy and supply it, cleverly designed to meet the requirements of harassed news editors. THE COMMONWEAL'S recent editorial describes some of these organizations. The Catholic Church is not among them. "Yes, of course it is propaganda, but propaganda in the legitimate, honorable, reasonable, humane sense of the word," says THE COMMONWEAL. Newspapermen will concur in that opinion. News columns are ever open for this kind of news. They get it from all others but Catholics.

Then why the "corporate silence"?

Now, What of You?

To N.R.A.

With sack and bale here comes the creaking cart,
  Rutting the ways where flashing axes hew;
Upon the patient earth we do our part;
  Now, what of you?

Slowly the rusted bearings jerk and start,
  And smoking chimneys cheer the anxious view;
In sweaty mines and mills we do our part;
  Now, what of you?

The shelves are crammed in every beckoning mart,
  And laden vans the dwindling stores renew;
Full staffed with courteous hands we do our part;
  Now, what of you?

We pledge the sacred honor of our heart,
  To live the codes we gave sworn fealty to;
Leader and led, in toil we do our part;
  Now, what of you?

Learn of the fearless bird a better art;
  Frolic with lightning as you breast the blue;
Winged with soul courage you shall do your part,
  And we with you.

FRANCIS P. DONNELLY.

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PITY THE POOR POLITICIAN!

By ERNEST A. DEWEY

LAST summer a fine old gentleman remarked to me, "I am a politician." He said it casually, without a sardonic quirk of the lips, without a trace of derision, without apology, just as he might have said, "I am a banker" or "I am a lawyer." Much as I love the game of politics I must admit I was startled to realize that he did not consider the statement a confession. The word "politician" has fallen into such disrepute in our contemporary language that his remark was almost like hearing a lawyer say, "I am a shyster," or a doctor, "I am a quack!"

Denunciation of our politicians is a periodic outburst of our perpetual emotion. It thunders from pulpit, press and street corner, and harried officialdom all over the nation just now is making a prodigious effort to comply with the angry demands of a public which does not know what it wants. For everything that has happened the politician is blamed. We damned Hoover for the depression and we swear at our state and local officials for high taxes that we voted on ourselves. Business journals demand reduction in government expense and more money for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to thaw out frozen financial assets. Church organizations solemnly pass resolutions importuning their congressman to vote against any and all changes in the prohibitory laws, while most of the membership hopes secretly that repeal will render unnecessary an increase in the scope of the federal income tax.

The position of the politician was not especially enviable even before the storm of the depression broke upon his head. That virtually all politicians are crooked apparently had become a settled national conviction which nothing could shake. The recent unpleasantness at Washington over the suggestion of congressional bribe-taking in an article by Sergeant-at-Arms Barry, which culminated in his suspension by the Senate, was a particularly helpless gesture in recognition of this national prejudice. If the Senate expected to counteract popular opinion in any degree, then its action was unfortunate indeed. The suspension of Barry was taken in the hinterland as crowning proof of congressional corruption. Hearing the street-corner comment on the incident, I was reminded of the remark of an old political maestro who had just launched a torrent of accusation against an opponent. "Now," he said, "all that will be necessary to convict him in the public mind is for him to deny it. If he does that we've got him sunk."

At the bottom of our contempt for politicians is the foulness of our political campaigns. Throughout the greater part of our national existence these campaigns have been carnivals of muck-raking, mud-slinging and the spreading of whispered slanders. No one denies that our campaigns are "dirty." No one could possibly deny it. The American public just loves rotten politics. At every biennium it wallows in scandal, slander, mud and muck. When, and if ever, our political campaigns are dry cleaned, it is possible that our childlike faith in the dishonesty of our public officials will disappear and also the casual comment, "What's the difference who's elected?"

Someone has said that "politicians are no crookeder than everybody else." Yet, since the American public prefers to believe the worst of its leaders, the wonder is that more politicians have not yielded to the temptation to be as crooked as many of their constituents think they are.

Being obvious, no one has bothered to provide an axiom that the high-minded and sensitive individual does not last long in politics. If he loves the game enough, he compromises with his ideals in favor of expediency. Otherwise he merely drops out of the political picture.

W. G. Clugston, a newspaperman with a flair for politics, once lectured me in this connection. His remarks have lingered in my memory along with much of his original picturesque phrasing:

"The high-souled chap is a misfit in politics. One term is his limit. He is elected governor, let us say. The echoes of the band music at his inaugural ceremony have scarcely died away before his beloved public has decided his lofty ideals are assumed as a cloak for hypocrisy. In about two months the profound conviction begins to settle on the body politic that their elected servant has sinister designs on the public treasury, or the rumor becomes current that he is sneaking out at night with a stenographer from the vehicle department or has turned the statehouse basement into a rathskeller. Stories start to float that he is a creature of secret unmentionable vices. Somebody hears that at the age of ten he jabbed his Aunt Hattie with a hairpin, and the story grows until you are informed on the best authority that he stabbed his dear old mother in the bosom with a butcher knife and buried her in the back yard in a wash-boiler.

"Governor Johnston of Oklahoma was an example. He was one of these solemn, sincere and sober guys. Somebody, I think it was Tom Kight, accused him of being a Rosicrucian. The dear people of Oklahoma didn't know what a Rosicrucian was but it sounded pretty awful. Somebody informed them that one of the things a Rosicru-

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cian did was to get up at two o'clock in the morning. They decided that nobody would be getting up in the middle of the night for any good purpose and Governor Johnston ought to be ashamed of himself, so they got busy and 'repealed' him. It turned out afterward that he wasn't a Rosicrucian at all. Then he was more unpopular than ever.

"The smart politician is one who deliberately cultivates the impression that he is just a little crooked but not very. The dear public is thus confirmed in its pet opinion, but not to a degree sufficient to arouse indignation, and he can hold office as long as he wants on the theory that the guys who run against him might be bigger crooks that he is. If he is determined to be scrupulously honest he must be careful to let himself be smudged just a little because his public wants to believe it is being gypped.

"You must always be careful about telling the truth. The American people like to believe that they are hard-headed and sceptical. If they suspect you of telling the plain, unvarnished truth they know you are doing so in order to deceive them about something else. Two things the politician never gets: credit for honesty and sympathy for his troubles. There is no society for prevention of cruelty to politicians. He has no defenders and no friends except those who want jobs. You can accuse him of anything and there will be no difficulty in getting someone to believe it. No proof is required. It all goes back, of course, to our preference for believing the worst of our leaders. This is ridiculous, of course, but as someone has said, 'When most people think they think, they are merely rearranging their prejudices.' You learn in politics that people do their thinking with their emotions and their prejudices, and the more unreasonable a thing is the more people will be found to believe it."

As my own experience has ripened I have found all of this to be less exaggerated than I first believed. I have seen a governor of Kansas defeated for the nomination by his own party in the primary because he purchased a $150 linen tablecloth for the governor's mansion. I have seen officials with fine records defeated by silly campaign stories and their places occupied by lame-brains who turned departmental efficiency into a mare's nest, and I have seen the lame-brains rewarded by reëlection on fantastic claims of "economy."

One of the best qualified candidates I ever knew refused to allow personalities or malicious whispering in his campaign for a governorship. He was determined that his own campaign should be clean and free from muck-raking. There was released against him one of the filthiest and most abusive campaigns I have ever known. Every conceivable slander was spread about him. He is wiser now, in defeat.

Frank R. Kent once remarked, in a discussion of our political idiosyncracies, that "the best man always loses." By that he meant that the candidate who is contemptuous of demagoguery and who refuses to cater to popular prejudice must pay the price of defeat for his convictions. Politics is a game for which the rules are made by the audience. The audience wants dirt, so dirt it shall have. The politician plays the game according to the rules indicated. His job is to win elections.

The American politician and office-holder has developed a thick hide for slander, accusation and criticism. He had to. The armored body of the dinosaur is pointed out as an example corroborating the Darwinian theory of survival of the fittest. The politician, like the dinosaur, had to cultivate a thick hide in his natural instinct to protect himself. He dared not be sensitive. Politics is an arena, not a chess board. Zest is added to the American bull fight by the fact that the combatants never know until the votes are counted which one will be the bull that is slaughtered and which the matador.

The complaint often is made that politicians ignore the wishes of their constituents. There are reasons why this should be true—but it isn't. The politician is not that sort of fool. He knows that to openly thumb his nose at the electorate is to invite his political demise, and he is opposed to that. His private opinion is another matter. There is hardly a state in the union which is not getting better government than its citizens deserve. The reason is that the integrity of our politicians is of a higher order than they are given credit for, and because our political bosses and office-holders have a higher respect for positions of public trust than the people they serve. Our American attitude is an open invitation to bad government. Yet the American politician is rare who deliberately yields to the temptation to give us the sort of government we are asking for. For his restraint he is entitled to a gratitude we are not intelligent enough to accord him. The public encourages the flouting of its own wishes, and worse, by its confidence in the corruption of its servants. It seldom knows what it wants, anyway. And the politician has ample reason to feel that he has done enough already by setting himself up as a target to be shot at. For him the campaign is a financial, intellectual and even physical punishment which he must undergo as a penalty for holding a state or national job.

Nevertheless, the politician—whether he be boss, job-holder or campaigner—loves the game. It is the king of American sports. It has a fascination that never stales. There is no greater thrill than the one which accompanies the bloodless Balaklava of political warfare; the surging mass emotions stirred in the minds of hundreds of thou-

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sands of people, the flaring roar of prejudice caused to flame by purpose or by chance, the brief but heart-filling period of adulation by crowds under the spell of eloquence, applause, blaring bands, banquets for pomposity to strut sitting down and, most of all, the steady purposeful battle to capture the most fickle of all prizes—the fancy of the mob-mind. The politican plays with thunderbolts—the playthings of the gods. To set vibrating like a violin string the mixed emotions of the mob-mind is a thrill that transcends either victory or defeat. It is no petty game in which the stakes mean control and responsibility for the governmental destinies of hundreds of thousands, or millions, of people. That is why a politician remains a politician. He will not quit even after the edge of his astuteness is dulled by age and changing times, and his strategems are too palpable to be effective with the crowd. The voice of Power has a golden sound. It is in response to its sibylline whispers that the politician humbles himself to wear the rags of disrepute in hope that he may be the one to raise that whisper to a gorgeous reëchoing roar.

Pity the poor politician! He gets no credit for his good qualities and he is blamed for faults that are more our own than his. He gets none of the hero-worship that is accorded our football players, prize-fighters, flagpole-sitters, and marathon dancers. What praise he gets is mostly begging flattery. What if he is vain, addicted to demagoguery, full of promises and overflowing with phrases vague in meaning? He may deserve every fragment of Hibernian confetti we toss at him but the fact still remains that he is a character the dear American people have created. When we "cuss" our politicians we really are swearing at ourselves!

On the Beach at Nantucket

The sun is everywhere and strong and quiet,
And everywhere and sounding is the sea.
Deliberate wings above the waves in riot
Poise to an arch, arching to wheel and flee.

The sun feeds minutely green grass and tree,
And minutely they wax in green and grow.
With swifting thunder and shook foam the sea
Ravels brief patterns on the beach below.

* * * *

Far off and long ago, and how remote,
Patterns of time and space dissolve away:
Here space is but a word, and time is not,
Only soft motion and eternal day.

Dearer than all anatomies of thought,
Stand up, as ultimate and bare,
These shapes of brightness, to no ending wrought,
But sinuous swaying in the stainless air.

MAURICE ENGLISH.

A FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE

By VIDA D. SCUDDER

CATHOLICS must surely rejoice in the permanence and the widening extent throughout Christendom, far beyond their own borders, of the influence of that passionately Catholic saint, Francis of Assisi. Any feeble attempts to claim the Poverello as a precursor of Protestantism fade away in the presence of his profound allegiance to the Blessed Sacrament, and to that priesthood through which the supernatural power of the Sacrament is forever imparted to the faithful. Yet it is also true that the attitude not only of Francis himself but of his followers is affecting many who realize imperfectly the source of his strength. This attitude is charged with suggestion for those concerned with the social problems of our bewildered modern world.

It was in awareness of this pertinence that seventy-five to a hundred devout lovers of the saint, drawn from many religious communions, gathered lately for an institute on "Saint Francis and Today" held at Adelynrood, South Byfield, Massachusetts, the community house of the Anglican Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross, a woman's organization. The institute opened with prayer, including the Breviary Collects for Saint Francis's Feasts and a Franciscan Litany. The first address was a deeply felt talk on the personal power of the saint, derived in part from his fusion of loyalty to organization with the free spiritual insight of the mystic. Two historical lectures followed, stressing the economic and social background of Francis's day and presenting certain high lights in Franciscan history. Excellent charts of that history were on the walls; tables were covered with books, scholarly and popular, chosen from the tremendous range of Franciscan literature; readings at meals from the dear Franciscan classics, the "Mirror of Perfection," the "Sacrum Commercium" and the "Fioretti" helped to create the desired atmosphere; while gardens and woods in which holy Friars might well have been met invited to recollection.

Presently the institute settled down to the sessions of three round tables, on the Franciscan attitude toward "Poverty and Property," "Work and Reward," "War and Peace." Discussion was honest and keen; specimens of questions submitted may be of interest:

> For Francis, is personal and social poverty a necessary phase of the deeply religious life? What did Francis actually teach on the question of property? For the three branches of his order? In general? What did the Church say on the difficult questions of following the commands of Francis? Was the "Poor Use" an acceptable emphasis?
>
> What makes the question involved in property of such concern to the Christian? Is the root principle in our present social order the principle of private property? Define this principle. Is it in contradiction to Christian demands? (Discussion along here of papal encyclicals and of the distinction between property for use and property for power.)
>
> What safeguard against beggary in the Franciscan

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ideal? Does the dependence involved in renunciation of private property demoralize? What difference between Franciscan dependence and the dependence of a stockholder in our present order? How about the "dole"?

Is there a middle ground attainable in Christian idealism and action between poverty and property?

What Christian principles should govern the attitude toward reward? What purpose has work in a society? Where lies the real danger of the "reward" idea? Is "work" removed from the sphere of happy creativity for the modern workman?

Consider some attempts in history to adjust this problem. Why did they fail? The Friars. The pietistic groups of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Brook Farm. Etc., etc.

What modern attempts are offered in this field? The Soviet Republic. The Technocrats. Socialism.

Upon what grounds does Francis place his plea for peace? In what phase of the social structure does he place the prime cause for war?

Is it possible to eliminate warfare from a social order constructed on our present bases?

Wide differences naturally made themselves felt in the discussions; the group included Socialists, one or two near-Communists on Christian lines, as well as conservative minds. But these earnest Christian people did reach a basis of considerable agreement. It was almost startling to note how much in our latest social thinking and experiment had been anticipated in the dramatic story of the Friars. For instance, the distinction between property for use and property for power—*usus* and *dominium;* the consonance of the Franciscan attitude toward work and reward with the emerging economies of an age of plenty; the Franciscan dread of money with, let us say, the Social Credit schemes. It should be said that questions were carefully approached from three angles: that of the Franciscan call to exceptional individuals, that of the call to the group—and deeply interesting reports were received from groups in India, Japan, Germany, Italy, England—and finally that of possible suggestions offered by the Franciscan story toward the health of the social whole. A few of the conclusions may be cited:

> The lofty ideal of Francis of absolute renunciation of property and the glad commitment to a life of poverty moves us to translate the ideal into a practicable modern way of life. We would for ourselves renounce the desire to hold property with any intent of power and would give ourselves joyfully to the simple life. . . . We are convinced that the unrestricted rights of private property are causal in many social ills; that the Franciscan ideal of absolute poverty is right in motive and in spiritual fact; and in social fact its acceptance of "use" and denial of "power" is a valid principle for our present social action.
>
> The acute problem of the relation of reward, or compensation, to work, must and can be governed by Christian principles. The cruel grind of modern industrialism, the wicked unfairness of its disproportionate rewards, lie heavy on individual and social consciences alike. . . . A follower of Christ and Saint Francis will be humble and loving. Humility neither claims nor measures rewards for itself, but love does claim and measure right rewards for those it loves. Servants of God must persistently strive to discover, demand and maintain adequate standards of compensation for the world's toilers. . . . Christian principles suggest the orientation of work around production of the necessities of the group rather than the "reward" of the individual.
>
> In the area of the war mind and system, we commend a courageous and creative pacifism as the best expression for the Christian ideal. . . . The major causes of modern warfare are found in an economic structure domestic and international that is essentially unchristian. The qualified Franciscan refusal in the Third Order to bear arms is full of suggestion to the Christian Church.

A devotional atmosphere charged with Franciscan joy and aspiration lifted the life of the institute to a high plane. Every day began with reciting the "Canticle of the Sun," and the institute closed with a procession to the Cross, where we joined in the great "Praises" of Saint Francis. The temper of the gathering was well expressed in the concluding words of the final lecture, "Our Social Order in the Light of Franciscan Principles," given by a young university teacher of church history:

> If the principles of Francis touch the social order of today at comparatively few places, they touch it to the quick; and as for our own lives, we can escape the tremendous earnestness and radical thoroughness with which he enunciated and lived his principles, only at the peril of our souls.
>
> "The poverty of that man brings great shame upon us."
>
> "He deemed that when he had something a poor man lacked, he had robbed that poor man."
>
> These sentences should burn themselves into our consciences and haunt us every day of our lives, lest we become impervious to shame, and say, "All these commandments have I kept from my youth up," without even adding, "What lack I yet?"

Verily, the spirit of the Poverello moves today in many lands. Some at least of those present left the institute, feeling that the way alike to personal conduct and to social action had been distinctly illumined by contact with comrades of centuries ago and also of today, in the age-long quest for spiritual and social freedom.

Absence

Absence is only this,
A day or more,
A day or two or less
And then the shore.

I know the shore is there,
I know, I know.
Yet cleave, O windy air,
Clear weather, blow!

WITTER BYNNER.

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COMMUNICATIONS

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TO the Editor: No doubt many readers of THE COMMONWEAL will be interested in a Chicago venture concerning that most desirable phase of Catholic Action, a library containing literature of the most excellent type accessible to all, whatever their tastes and aspirations.

Almost two years ago the Chicago Calvert Club inaugurated a Renting Library under the auspices of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, space being given in the headquarters of this organization for a reading-room and library nook, which makes it possible to carry on the enterprise until such time as it becomes self-supporting. On the shelves are found the latest worth-while books, "books useful and interesting to Catholics a specialty." It is a very modest beginning judged merely by the number of volumes on the shelves, not yet reaching the 1,000 mark, and the membership so far but 400. But every book has been carefully selected and brings to the reader the choicest from every field of literature. A membership fee of $1.00 is charged, which is returned to the patron when his association with the library ceases, if he so desires. But many donate the sum as a life membership. The rental fee is $.03 per day no matter what the value of the book.

The enterprise is kept alive and flourishing by the generous and untiring effort of Miss Sara B. O'Neill, who has devoted her life to the dissemination of good reading according to Catholic ideals. She is assisted by three or four others, members of the Calvert Club, who give their time without charge. Miss O'Neill places immediately upon the shelves, at her own expense, all the new worth-while books as they come out, and waits until the cash drawer brings remuneration, if it does. Despite the fact that the library was launched in the midst of the depression, we are able to keep it going and those who patronize it are most enthusiastic and constant. We are slowly becoming known, but publicity through patrons is not the speediest method. The *New World,* our archdiocesan paper, gives us space each week for short reviews of new books, which helps and has brought us new members.

Every Saturday afternoon we have a gathering of young men and women keenly interested in discussion of world events, philosophy, good books of every type. It has come about quite naturally and we hope to see it grow. It may be the nucleus of a fine movement. The last Saturday afternoon of each month we play Bridge, charging a small sum toward a book fund.

We have survived on half a loaf, materially speaking, but one thing lifts our hearts to a song of victory during the span of our short existence. We have been able, through the splendid books on hand and our personal contacts, to be of incalculable assistance in smoothing the path and bringing into the fold, at least by encouragement, several converts, one of them a Jew.

If there are readers of THE COMMONWEAL residing in Chicago who are interested we would be very glad to have them visit us and inspect the library at Room 218, 506 So. Wabash Ave. (C.Y.O. Building), at any time from eleven o'clock to six, week days.

MARY F. COUGHLIN.
Secretary, Chicago Calvert Club.

"ALL GOD'S CHILLUNS GOT SHOES"

Assisi, Italy.

TO the Editor: One day last autumn my COMMONWEAL reached me in Assisi, where I had been spending a fruitful and happy summer. In it, I read a letter from Father Cuthbert, O.M.Cap—an appeal on behalf of the half-starved, ill-clad children of Assisi who were facing a winter of misery. Delighted that I could make a small return for all that Saint Francis had given me, I sped up the hill to the Collegio S. Lorenzo with a modest donation. Lawren Ford was with me, and we told Father Cuthbert that we wanted to be the first Americans to respond to his request for help. We feared there would not be many others owing to the widespread distress at home.

Father Cuthbert had the idea to lay out his capital in shoes. He selected twenty of the most wretched children and took their measurements. The contract was given to the local cobbler, who agreed to make them for 30 lire a pair (about $1.50). Stout, sporty little hand-made boots he turned out, and when they were finished, we were invited to a party at the Collegio. (It happened on All Soul's Day—but that was a coincidence.) It was a lovely party! The children sat in a semicircle, and as their names were called, they received their shoes, and promptly put them on. Several would have preferred to carry them home so that their beauty might not be marred. Then all together they thanked the Signorine Americane very prettily and said a prayer for them. What a good return for a small investment!

Later on, contrary to expectations, money rolled in from across the sea. Bigger, but no better, parties were given and shoes and clothes and food were distributed to over three hundred children. Their fame was noised abroad. Mothers with their offspring from the surrounding country came in sad pilgrimages to the doors of the Collegio, but as the supply was not inexhaustible, many went away empty-handed and bare-footed.

Father Cuthbert is deeply grateful for the assistance sent from America last winter. "What touched me most," he said, "were the small sums from mothers of families who had little to spare." He himself is too shy to ask THE COMMONWEAL readers to help him again this year, so knowing the need I make bold to appeal in his stead. He really must see that "All God's chilluns got shoes"—and food—during the hard winter in this poverty-stricken city of Saint Francis.

His address is: Collegio S. Lorenzo, Via S. Francesco, Assisi (Perugia), Italy.

FRANCES W. DELEHANTY.

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LORD THAT I MAY SEE

Central Aguirre, Puerto Rico.

TO the Editor: Your editorial "Lord that I May See," in the issue of July 21, is very worthy of your publication.

There must be many Catholic men and women who would enjoy writing in braille, but who, unfortunately, do not realize what an inexpensive task it is. The American Red Cross teaches braille gratis; the slate, pencil, book of instructions, and paper cost very little. And so much good work has been done by volunteer workers in their spare hours.

There is a chance to help our Catholic blind. Learn to write the braille system, and then transcribe Catholic books for the blind. Communicate with your nearest Red Cross Chapter.

LEO R. O'NEILL.

PONDERINGS OF A PH.D.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: I am a Ph.D. at last—my thesis approved and my oral examination passed several months ago. With a lump in my throat and a thump in my chest I answered the questions of my examiners as best I could. I forgot who won the battle of the Jutland. I was never sure whether Archimedes called his wife Eureka, or called "eureka" to his wife when he discovered the famous Archimedean Screw. But I did remember that it was the Germans who civilized the world and that God alone knows what has become of the prehistoric Celt.

My thesis was at first fifty pages of virgin thought, innocent of quotation; then it became a hundred, then two hundred pages, quoted, foot-noted, indexed and ready for the world. In it I tried to show what I know and to keep in the dark what I do not know.

Now I feel that the morning of my life is over; that it is afternoon for me and I must bear the heat and burden of the day. Before I take up my burdens and the heat gets hot, I must play, spending some days in the sunshine by the sea, some evenings in pleasant company.

KEVIN MAUGHAN.

HONEST BOOK REVIEWS

Rochester, Minn.

TO the Editor: I read and enjoy THE COMMONWEAL, particularly your honest book reviews. In fact, I am determined to purchase only those books which you recommend. Here is the rub—why do not publishers advertise with you? I for one find it very inconvenient and quite annoying to be constantly looking up and rarely find publishers' addresses.

Recently I recommended the Catholic Book Club to a reader and buyer of best sellers, but I do not have the address, and have not found it in a half-dozen Catholic periodicals to which I subscribe. Kindly ask them for a tiny ad!

A READER.

BOOKS

A Large Fiction

Anthony Adverse, by Hervey Allen. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $3.00.

"ANTHONY ADVERSE" has been called picaresque. The term needs much qualification before it accurately describes the novel. The picaresque novelist was rarely as much concerned with his hero's soul as is Mr. Allen; but then Mr. Allen writes in an age which has so many doubts about the soul that, at least in its fiction, it must perforce pay much attention to it. Nor did the narrator of the picaro's adventures, coming before the Romantic Revolt, give himself to extended description of scenery and evocation of atmosphere—things indulged in by Mr. Allen at such lengths as to come close to being serious vices. A large number of the picaresque novels certainly rival "Anthony Adverse" in bulk and give as little evidence of internal necessity for their size; for it is true that Mr. Allen's novel might have been half of its present twelve hundred pages and still suffered no essential loss. Lack of faith in his readers may explain the author's prolixity; he does not seem to grant them the imagination which will invest any scene with all the minor details that accompany an event in real life—the things which the mind automatically supplies when the writer makes plain those larger matters not discoverable by ordinary vision.

As a biographer Mr. Allen appears so well to have learned the virtue of completeness that he has forgotten what he knew as a poet: that the largest statements are often made in the fewest words Yet it would be unjust to ask of him that he be a poet in "Anthony Adverse"; in one respect he has moved back toward the novel as it was in its beginning; he writes what is preëminently prose. If the long poem so infrequently flourishes today, the novel is not without blame; it has assumed many of the qualities of poetry, and especially poetry's immediacy, its welding into a single unit of the word and the thing to which the word refers, the creation, as it were, of a new object of knowledge. Poetry *is;* prose is *about;* and Mr. Allen's writing, for all its lyric passages, is *about* Anthony Adverse; it describes things which are external to itself.

This explains why Anthony's physical adventures are more convincing than the adventures of his spirit; the former are the fit material of prose, the things, recalling Aristotle, of which history treats, but the latter (which first got adequate treatment in fiction from Stendahl) need to be re-created rather than recounted, and to that extent are the stuff of poetry. Each work being judged in its own genre, no disparagement is implied in this, for Mr. Allen, returning to the prosaic approach and method, has achieved an appeal that even no epic poem can do without: the appeal to our interest in what is going to happen next.

Indeed this interest is the best reason for which "Anthony Adverse" will be read (perhaps for many years to

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come). It is a good historical romance; it has the glamor radiating from any age which has passed, the allure of distant places—Italy, old Cuba, Africa of the slave trade; it has the thrill of actions more daring than any of us are compelled to attempt, of decisions whose speed we need never emulate. Though a great many of the characters are built up out of a single trait and have a Jonsonian flatness but not hugeness, and though the prose often falls into too familiar constructions, "Anthony Adverse" always finds us eager to read on, thankful there are so many hundreds of pages to arouse this rarely stimulated curiosity.

GEOFFREY STONE.

Dramatic Psychologists

Three French Dramatists, by Arthur Tilley. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

A MAJOR aspect of French dramatic composition has been traced by Mr. Tilley in his study of these three figures, Racine, Marivaux and Alfred de Musset. Though artists of widely disparate conception, each may be said to embody the spirit of his age. All three have the common bond of method, the method of psychological scrutiny.

Racine, borrowing generously from the Greeks, was the first to emphasize the inner workings of the human mind as a factor in dramatic development, rather than the force of external events—the "destiny" which the Greeks of his inspiration and his own contemporaries considered the prime mover of tragedy. He has been called, and justly so, the father of modern French drama; certainly his technique of approach, which we have come to look upon as so essentially French, still prevails.

Marivaux, less well known abroad (and until recent years scarcely more appreciated at home), was the eighteenth-century disciple of Racine. His early works, however, show the more definite influence of the Italian comedy—Columbine and Pantaloon, nymphs and shepherds in the manner of Watteau. Later he discards the graceful but ineffectual elegancies of the period, and his imagination grapples with the deeper springs of human behavior. Eventually we find him following in the footsteps of Racine as a psychologist of love.

The extent to which Musset in his turn was influenced by Marivaux is, as Mr. Tilley points out, a matter of conjecture. Certainly there is no conscious debt on Musset's part. It is to Shakespeare that he owes his spiritual kinship to the other two, the revelation of "Hamlet" which opened to his fancy a new and undeveloped dramatic field.

Mr. Tilley has made very scholarly analyses of all the plays, and these he has supplemented with such biographical data as illuminate the progress of the artistic evolution of his subjects. As a reference his book should be welcomed by students of the French theatre, while the more casual amateur will find it a stimulating background for further reading.

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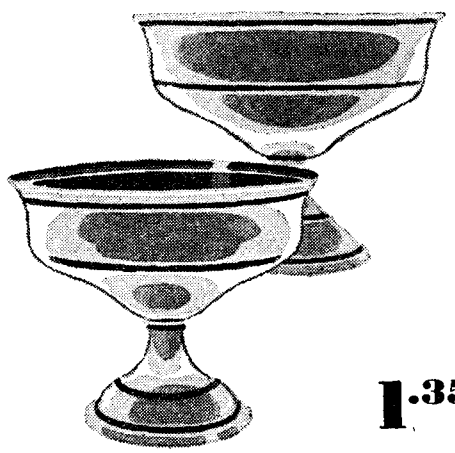

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Mathematics of Economics

Debt and Production, by Bassett Jones. New York: John Day Company. $2.50.

AS HE informs us in the Preface, the author of this book had reached the conclusion about ten years ago, "that economics 'as she is written' has little if any relation to our economy as it existed during the time from 1800 to date." Thereupon he undertook "a metrical investigation" of the industrial system. In March of the present year he set forth the results in a paper read before the American Statistical Association. This paper is now published within the covers of a book, but as "Appendix." The other and larger part of the volume is designated "Introduction."

The method employed in the principal part of the book (the Appendix) is that of higher, if not highest, mathematics. The reviewer has not attempted to read these pages. Apparently the main object of the Introduction was to translate the technical language of the Appendix into terms understandable by the economically minded multitude. Upon the critical and technical discussion carried on in the Introduction the reviewer does not undertake to pass judgment. The main conclusions seem to be sound. They may be thus summarized: The growing yearly debt charges cannot be met without a corresponding increase in the volume of production; but "production does not and physically cannot" grow at the required rate and ratio; therefore, unless the toll levied upon industry by debt be somehow and considerably reduced, our whole system of production and distribution will go to smash.

"It looks," says the author, "as if we were suffering from overproduction of debt, not overproduction of goods. The latter is a consequence of the former." Would it not be more correct to say that both kinds of overproduction flow with equal immediacy from a common cause, namely, a bad distribution of the national income and purchasing power? The burden of debt has become economically, as well as socially, intolerable for two fundamental reasons: excessive and wasteful capital investment and excessive rates of interest. If a larger share of the product were given to labor and a smaller share to capital, the effective demand for consumers' goods and the volume of production would be increased, excesses and wastes in the capital structure would be decreased. The net result would be a diminution of both the principal of and the annual rate of interest on the debt. In other words, the main cause of the debt impasse is the same as the main cause of the great industrial depression. Economically, it is a stupid distribution of the annual product; ethically, it is human greed.

The author's criticism, quoted above, of existing economic literature is too comprehensive. A distinction should be drawn between positive or descriptive economics and that body of attempts to explain industrial phenomena known as economic theory. The former is in the main realistic and useful. A very large part of the latter is irrelevant, ultra-refined and useless. Witness the in-

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terminable discussions on value and interest and more recently the mass of futile and platitudinous theorizing about the business cycle. The amount of light thrown by the latter upon the vital questions concerning the business depression of 1929-1933 seems to have been of little practical benefit to the American people.

JOHN A. RYAN.

Liberal Judaism

Religion and Its Social Setting; Together with Other Essays, by Abraham Cronbach. Cincinnati: The Social Press.

THIS is a collection of Dr. Cronbach's theological and sociological essays, published to commemorate the tenth anniversary of his professorship at the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. Religion and its social setting occupies about one-third of the volume, comprising such topics as good and evil, religion and its appraisal, God and spirituality, etc. The rest of the book is made up of reprints of articles and tracts on philanthropy, family life, traditions, and the Scriptures and their meaning. It sets forth the modern views of liberal Judaism.

No student of comparative religion can be indifferent to this work. The author reveals some startling tenets. God is to him an inspirational not a factual and much less a causative concept. God is not the cause nor the end of man. Hence, the word "God should be abandoned when addressing people for whom it has lost its favorable inspirational connotation." The final reason why good and bad are inculcated in childhood is, according to the author, not to bring about conformity with eternal principles and the law of nature, nor on account of divine sanction and reward, but solely for social control. Everything considered, religion is to him "opium for the uneducated mob."

The sociological essays reveal much that is good and beautiful in Jewish life and tradition; still more could have been said. But what has been written is sufficient to give the reader a fair idea of the religious, philosophical and sociological background of the modern Jew. In this lies the principal value of the book, especially since a teacher in Israel ought to be a reliable exponent. Today many Jews hold important educational positions. The stage, radio and screen—all influential factors in American life—are to a great extent in their hands. Some of the largest newspapers, magazines and publishing houses are controlled by them. Many are engaged in social work, philanthropy, law and the arts. They have been successful in economic and political life and have been rewarded for their efforts. On the other hand, how will Christian culture fare, if Judaism in combination with neo-paganism or "modern science" introduces elements that are diametrically opposed to all that is sacred and inviolable to Christians? How can a conflict be avoided with those who consider religion no more than "a person's assertion of his highest purpose"? These are momentous questions of more than ordinary importance to parents and society at large.

KILIAN J. HENNRICH.

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Briefer Mention

Obelists at Sea, by C. Daly King. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

ERUDITION in the Van Dyne mysteries eventually became slightly ridiculous. Mr. King avoids the pitfall by making his character's erudition an integral part of this very excellent and oftentimes hilarious detective novel. There are few who will not enjoy the fun he has at the expense of a popular, a fashionable, an earnest and a cautious psychologist. These four gentlemen, en-route to a convention of their kind in London, are engaged in solving a murder aboard the SS. Megonaut. Each, working from his own pet theory, points to a suspect who by all the logic of deduction, providing always the doctor's psychological method were sound, should be the criminal. Meanwhile a pleasant introduction to those faddistic schools, which seek to explain all human conduct by unproved hypotheses, is offered solely for the purpose of exposing their fallacies. The psychologists are completely wrong in their conclusions, yet are sufficiently right in some of their deductive processes to aid the apprehension of the guilty by an old-line detective. Mr. King is adroit with his surprises and even those who occasionally condescend to detective novels will feel themselves rewarded by reading his book.

He Arrived at Dusk, by R. C. Ashby. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

HERE is a detective story which will probably appeal to the fans. The villain appears in the guise of a Roman soldier, long dead, and the first half of the book is spent in properly bewildering and terrifying the reader with all appropriate ghostly trappings and mysterious murders. With the aid of these the story works up to the climax and finally the loose ends are correctly tied according to rule. The writing as such leaves much to be desired, but the large public which demands this particular form of relaxation does not insist upon subtlety of characterization or idea. The story is mechanically sound, more perhaps should not be asked.

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